



Lakewood Discovery Center

Salina Parks and Recreation Department

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March 2006

Lakewood Discovery Center Newsletter Features

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Lakewood Discovery Center is a feature of Salina Parks & Recreation Department - our mission goal is to provide opportunities for the community to explore and learn about our environment through self-discovery and hands on activities. Lakewood provides Salina with its own urban wildlife sanctuary and nature center, which allow us to reach our goals.

The Discovery Center is a teaching tool in a sense that we provide many of the outdoor aspects that we have in the park in an indoor setting. Lakewood provides visitors an opportunity to get up close to some of the wildlife that lives in the park. Through these encounters, the visitor's awareness and knowledge of our native wildlife will increase.

As our community grows, we also want to grow with them, and continue to provide a great place to observe, and learn about our environment. No matter the age of the visitor, the environment is not ours, merely ours to take care of and pass along to the future overseers of the land.

The Supervisor's Desk: Welcome to the first quarterly edition of the Lakewood Discovery Center newsletter. We are excited to offer this small insight of information to the people that have participated and supported Lakewood programs and activities over the years. Our goal for this publication is to provide more news and information about what is happening at Lakewood and the events that are in your area.

In addition to general programs and events, we will provide special opportunities for you to learn more about our natural world through some of our features that will be coming out in future quarterly newsletters. We view the newsletter as a way of saying thank you to those of you who are interested in participating in outdoor educational programming, whether that is by being involved in the programs or just enjoying the outdoors in your own recreational way. We will also have advanced information about some of our larger upcoming trips that Lakewood offers through the year. Lakewood Discovery Center program reservations are all made through the parks & recreation office located in the city/county building room 100.



Brian Underwood, Natural Resources Supervisor



Lakewood Wildlife Feature: "Spring Emergence"



Spring is a very popular time of year, with the return of warm weather, plants blooming, trees budding, and people's regained enthusiasm to avenge their efforts from last year's gardening. Along with all the excitement that "is" spring, a simple unassuming thing is also happening all around us, insect emergence. Just like many of us that have been absent in the outdoors through the winter months, the insect world is gaining a new grasp of their outdoor kingdom.

I say kingdom for a reason; insects rule the world by easily outnumbering all other animal families. The sheer number of insects and species of insects are just incredible. Kansas alone has 15-20 thousand species of insects. Sometimes I think half of those are mosquitoes, but in reality the insect world is so numerous in variety that a whole lifetime can be dedicated to the study of entomology.

Emergence is a time of renewal for the insect world and spring is the season that encourages their advance. With their appearance, many other aspects of nature can move forward with their yearly schedules. Insects impact flower pollination, seed dispersal, soil aeration to name a few. Some insects are protectors of some plant and animal species, and plunderers of others, but most importantly they provide a huge food source for many animals.

As the reigning king of the world, insects are very abused with the way most of them are treated by other animals, mainly by being eaten. The insect numbers are so high in comparison to other animal groups because the survival rates of insect species are very low. As an insect you are subjected to occupying the lower rungs of the food pyramid. Even though the lowest rungs are the most important ecologically speaking, you do not get much notoriety, especially compared to warm fuzzy critters that hog all the attention.

The insect world is very fascinating to me because we can learn so much from these little creatures that defy the possibilities that you and I live by. In addition to what their capabilities encompass, our modern world has much to learn from insects, many drugs and industrial uses have come from insect designs. The really intriguing thing about these creatures are that many new species are being discovered all around the world. Many believe that unknown insects hold the key to information that will change our world, just think all of this from a bug!

Amazing Insects

Largest Colony

*African Termites- 20 million

Strongest Insect

*Rhinoceros Beetle – can lift 600x its body

Best Architect

*South American Army Ant – has been known to build bridges over rivers out of colony members

Fastest Land Insect

*Tiger Beetle – hunts with eye-sight and runs down other insects, moves so sudden that its eyes blur, and has to stop every so often.

Brian Underwood



Educational Opportunities

Spring: (Listed in the P & R Spring Activities Guide. Call the main office to register: 309-5765.)

Spring Break Adventure Days: Bored during Spring Break? Looking for something to do. LDC offers programs on the Tuesday and Thursday of Salina Public Schools' Spring Break.

S.C.A.T.: All ages welcome. This 1½ hr program features Snacks, Crafts, Animals, and Trails. Participants will learn about native critters, take a guided nature walk, and make a snack as well as craft to take home.

T.B.A.: Check the Activity Guide each Spring for a different Thursday program.

Mother's Day Trip: All ages, 15 and under must be accompanied by an adult. Take mom on a trip she will remember. LDC offers a variety of sight-seeing opportunities and activities as we head out of town for fun.

Summer: (Listed in the P & R Summer Activities Guide. Call the main office to register: 309-5765.)

Father's Day Trips: All ages, 15 and under must be accompanied by an adult. Take dad on a trip he will enjoy. LDC offers a variety of sight-seeing opportunities and activities as we head out of town for a day of fun.

Backyard Detectives: Ages 4-5 and 6-8. These 1½ hr our classes focus in on one topic per, week, i.e. Creepy Crawlies. Each class makes a craft and snack and takes a nature walk in addition to other learning activities.

Jr. Explorers: Ages 9-12. This is an experiential learning series done in partnership with the Smoky Hill Museum. We do hands-on activities, interact with guest speakers, and travel to see what goes on behind the scenes. Each week has two days devoted to one topic.

G.R.E.A.T. Cops & Fossils: Grades 4th – 7th. These day long classes are a part of the Saline Co. Sheriff Department's G.R.E.A.T. program. Each class learns about the fossils that can be found in Kansas, and then travels to local fossil sites to search for fossils of their own. The participants will mount the fossils they find to take home.

Archery: Ages 7 and older. These 1 hr classes teach the sport's technique, safety, rules, and etiquette at a beginner and intermediate level.

Canoeing: Ages 7 and older. These 1 hr classes teach water safety and basic canoeing skills.

Fishing Explorers: Ages 7 and older. These day long programs offer several skill levels, beginning with Basics in Bluegills and moving on to Bass Fishing and Catfish. In each class, equipment, technique, and safety are taught.

Family Canoe Nights: All ages. These 45 min programs offer families an opportunity to enjoy the outdoors together with an evening of paddling on Lakewood Lake.

Fall: (Listed in the P & R Fall Activities Guide. Call the main office to register: 309-5765.)

Fall Family Nature Series:

Family Canoe Nights: All ages. These 45 min programs offer families an opportunity to enjoy the outdoors together with an evening of paddling on Lakewood Lake.

Campfire Stories: All ages welcome, although some of the stories are scary. ☺ Spend an October evening by the campfire, enjoying smores and hearing stories told by the LDC staff.

Pumpkin Fest: All ages. Celebrate the Halloween season with an evening of pumpkin carving. Pumpkins, carving tools, and treats are supplied.

Campfire Cooking: All ages. Learn the art of campfire cuisine. Techniques and "secrets" shared on how to make a fireside feast. Then try the different foods cooked that evening by the LDC staff. Past foods have included campfire lasagna, pot pie, and cinnamon donuts.

T.B.A.: Check the Activity Guide each Fall for other quarterly programming.

Winter: (Listed in the P & R Winter Activities Guide. Call the main office to register: 309-5765.)

Milford Lake Eagle Day: All ages, 15 and under must be accompanied by an adult. This day long program takes participants to Milford Lake where bald eagles nest. The trip includes touring the Milford Nature Center, an eagle program by the MNC staff, and time for eagle watching.

T.B.A.: Check the Activity Guide each Winter for other quarterly programming.

Year-Round :

In addition to this set programs, Lakewood offers Walk & Tours of the center, nature walks, girl & boy scout badge programs, and in-class programs. These programs are by appointment. Special topics can be requested for individual groups. Two weeks notice is required to book a program.



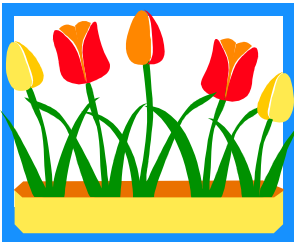


Lakewood Quarterly Programs



Lakewood Discovery Center trips and activities are designed to bring out the natural side in you. We structure our programs around natural/educational points of interest. Our destinations range from minimal physical activity to strenuous activity. To better gauge the activities suited for you we assign a star system to the event, ranging from 1–5 stars. 1 star includes light walking, and minimal activity, 2 stars include light walking, or more than one activity, 3 stars include moderate walking or physical effort, and extended hours of activity, 4 stars include moderate to considerable walking or physical effort, 5 stars include considerable walking or physical effort with activities. If you have any questions about these activities please contact us at 785-826-7335.

Mother's Day – Kansas Curiosity - This spring we are going to enjoy some of Kansas's unique hospitality as we tour the countryside on our day trip. We will start off touring the Konza Prairie Reserve; one of the largest natural tallgrass prairie preserves left in America. After our prairie tour we will head East to enjoy lunch at "Puffies Steak and Ice House" (self-proclaimed best steakhouse in Kansas). Then it will be onto our second Kansas attraction, the Wyldwood vineyards in Paxico. A tour of the facility and a stop in the free wine tasting room will round out our stay. To finish out our day we will stop in Wamego, and experience the annual tulip festival. This festival celebrates the spring bloom of tulips. Many craft booths and festival events will be available to indulge in. (2 stars)



When: Saturday, April 22
Time: 8:30 a.m. leave from Lakewood
Limit: 20 participants
Fee: \$30.00 includes transportation, and all tour fees (lunch on your own)

S.C.A.T.!!!!!!

Chase that Spring Break boredom away with an afternoon of Snacks, Crafts, Animals and Trails at Lakewood Discovery Center. Join us on a journey of discovery as we take a look at some of our native Kansas critters, learning how they live, what they eat, how they protect themselves, and more. We'll travel the trails in search of wildlife, and then enjoy some easy-to-make homemade snacks. Finally, use that creative spirit to make something that is naturally nifty to take home.

When: March 21
Time: 2:00 – 3:30 p.m.
Limit: 20 participants (all ages welcome)
Fee: \$5
Wear: Dress for the weather. Please wear close-toed shoes.




Wild Wonderful Wind

Windy Day? Harvest that energy and generate fun! Come celebrate wind with us as we create wind-friendly projects. Build your own homemade kites, learn to make a working pinwheel, and create musical wind chimes to decorate your urban habitat. We'll also learn how to predict the weather just by studying the wind! If the weather cooperates, we will give our new kites a try!!

When: March 23
Time: 2:00 – 3:30 p.m.
Limit: 20 participants (ages 8 and up)
Fee: \$10
Wear: Dress for the weather. Please bring gloves for kite flying.



Arkansas -  A Diamond In The Rough – Our spring trip to Arkansas will reveal a different side of the state most people don't ever see, the underneath side. We are going to visit the unique Crater of Diamonds State Park, home of the only public diamond mine in the United States. This state park allows the visitors to dig for the diamonds on their own and keep what you find! Some lucky diggers have unearthed diamonds worth thousands of dollars. In addition to our diamond digging, we will canoe the Ouachita River that winds its way through the forest covered mountains of central Arkansas. We will also be camping along the banks of the Ouachita River in the Ouachita National Forest. (5 stars)

When: Thursday, May 18 – Sunday, May 21

Time: Thursday 5:00 a.m. (Leave from Lakewood)

Limit: 12 participants

Fee: \$90.00 includes transportation, select meals, camping equipment, entrance fees, and canoe rentals



Father's Day of Discovery - Have your family join us as we explore our natural world we live in. This great experience will take us to the outdoors of the Dillon's Nature Center, where the natural world comes alive at your fingertips. We will also enjoy the Kansas Cosmosphere Museum, one of the largest air and space museums in America. We will participate in Dr. Goddard's Lab, and view the IMAX experience in addition to touring the museum. After lunch we will venture to the Hutchinson Zoo, where the focus is on native Kansas animals. They house 160 different animals that are on display for our viewing. The zoo also features train rides and entertainment. (1 star)

When: Saturday, June 17th

Time: 8:00 a.m. (meet at Lakewood) return late afternoon (approx. 5:30 p.m.)

Limit: 20 participants – 6 yrs. + recommended

Fee: \$25.00 (transportation, entrance fees, and tour fees) lunch is on your own

Yosemite & Tahoe Tour

Take a well deserved break and head out west to enjoy America's grandeur from the comfort of your plane seat. We will pass over a wide range of beautiful scenery from the western sand hills of Nebraska, to the rugged mountains of Colorado, across the Utah and Nevada basin, and finally the towering Sierras of California.

Our journey will take us to Reno, "The biggest little city in America". We will have a day of entertainment and exploration on our own to enjoy Reno. The next morning we will set out for Yosemite National Park, which is home to some of the most breath taking views and natural features in America. Some of the features include the Yosemite valley, the famous peaks of Half Dome and El Capitan, redwood forests, and the Hetch Hetchy valley. We will retire for the day at the beautiful Yosemite Lodge, which is nestled into the towering trees of the valley, which frame the view of the majestic Yosemite Falls.

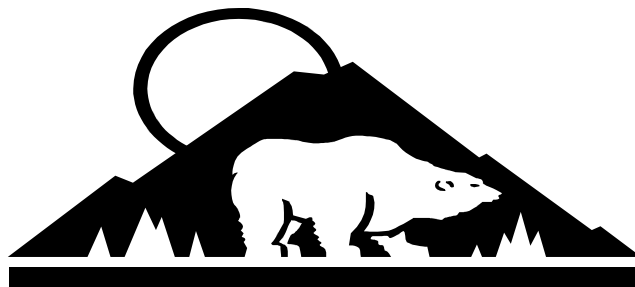
We will enjoy the better part of two days in the park before driving back to Reno. The next day we will board the Lake Tahoe Ferry for a complete tour of the beautiful backdrops that surround the high Sierra lake, and enjoy a romantic dinner on the water. We will then have one more evening in Reno before returning to Salina. (3 stars)

When: Thursday, September 21 – Tuesday, September 26

Time: TBA

Limit: 30 participants (18 yr. +)

Fee: \$850 double occupancy (bus transportation, plane tickets, hotel rooms, park fees, and select meals)





LAKEWOOD DISCOVERY CENTER

Wild Birthday Parties



Looking for a new and unique way to celebrate your child's birthday? Lakewood Discovery Center has just that! We offer a variety of programs that are not only educational, but also entertaining and fascinating for everyone. Come and celebrate your special day with us!

Who: Young persons age 4 and up (some age restrictions apply for certain programs)

When: Parties available Monday – Thursday with starting times between 9:00 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. Reservations made by contracting Lakewood Discovery Center at 826-7335.
Please reserve at least two weeks in advance.

What: The program will be 1 ½ hrs.

Approximately 1 hr is reserved for the activity and ~ ½ hr for gifts and treats, although this schedule can be flexible.

Persons reserving the program shall provide the treats and gifts.

Fee: A fee of \$25 or \$30 will be required for the program, depending on program chosen.

A \$2 fee will be applied for each child above the number of 15, up to a maximum of 20 children

Activities

\$25 Package

Creature Feature: Meet the animal ambassadors of Lakewood! We will be getting up close and personal with some of our animal friends, such as turtles, frogs, toads, salamanders, lizards, and snakes, to learn the amazing ways they eat, hide, and protect themselves in the wild.

Nature Walk: Explore the trails at Lakewood with us! Our Urban Wildlife Sanctuary offers lots to see and discover! We will learn about the trees, plants, and animals that make Lakewood their home. Who knows what we will see?!

Lakewood Games: We all love to play games. How about games that help us learn about nature? Even better! Together we will play a variety of nature-oriented games that are fun *and* educational. (*Ages 7 and up.*)

\$30 Package

Weird Science: Whoa! Cool! This is what you will hear as we wow and amaze partygoers with volcanoes, rockets, and much more. Come learn with us as we perform science experiments with ordinary household items. (*Ages 8 and up.*)

Canoeing: Come and cruise the waters of Lakewood! We will start with basic canoeing skills, then hit the water ready for fun! (*Offered May 1 – August 31, ages 10 and up.*)

Archery: Learn the basics of archery, then try your best Robin Hood imitation here at the archery range in our forest! (*Offered May 1 – August 31, ages 10 and up.*)

Bubble Magic: Pop! Kids love bubbles! We will explore how bubbles work and then see how many different ways we can make them and play with them. (*Offered May 1 – August 31.*)



Naturalist Notes *by Bill Gaskill*

I have been at Lakewood Discovery Center for six years now and have seen many changes here at the facility and park. We are constantly adding new indoor and outdoor features. We also change our many existing displays to keep things interesting and exciting. There are many new ideas that the Lakewood Staff has come up with and hope to add for 2006. This is one of the most enjoyable aspects of our jobs. We are allowed to let our imaginations run free when we develop our displays. Lakewood is unique in that almost all of our displays are designed and made in-house.

Lakewood will be adding 3 new displays for 2006. One will be a major construction project and will turn my office into a River Habitat. This new room will feature a river bank scene and will include several mammal and aquatic species. The room will also have an interactive element to it that will engage visitors. In the "What is it?" Room the nose station has been revamped. The new station will be a mini craft station where visitors can create 1 of 5 different creature faces to take home with them. The station will explain how these 5 different forms of wildlife use their sense of smell. Artwork has also been added to the butterfly scene in this room. A Bio-Hazard display is under construction in the young naturalist room that will explore poisonous and venomous plants and animals of Kansas.

There will also be some new additions to the outdoor areas that Lakewood manages. Eighteen new interpretive signs will be added to the trails at Lakewood Park. These signs will display maps of the trails and designate which trail you currently are on. The signs will really help our visitors while out exploring on the trail. Fish here at the lake will also be happy as we will be adding a new fish feeder to the lake. The old feeder had seen better days and spent more time broken than it did feeding. There are also plans to add experimental flower gardens to Lakewood. The gardens will feature three separate gardens that are tended to in different ways. It will be interesting to compare these gardens as the growing season progresses. Lakewood works with one Boy Scout a year on an Eagle Scout Project. This year's project will be the construction and placement of 5 sitting benches to the interpretive trail at Indian Rock Park.

Lakewood is looking forward to completing all these new improvements to both the center and outdoor areas. Every year we start with a plan and always seem to add a few more projects. I would recommend visiting the center and park throughout the year to watch our progress. Lakewood Discovery Center Staff awaits your visit and hopes that you are also excited about our new attractions.



Stump the Naturalist

To try and stump the naturalist, please submit a question pertaining to Kansas wildlife/environment. In the next issue we will print your question and our answer. If you stump our naturalists, we will put your name in the Newsletter Hall of Fame.



Please send me a question you would like to know more about. If you stump me, I will make you famous!



Lakewood Fun Page

Lakewood Trivia!

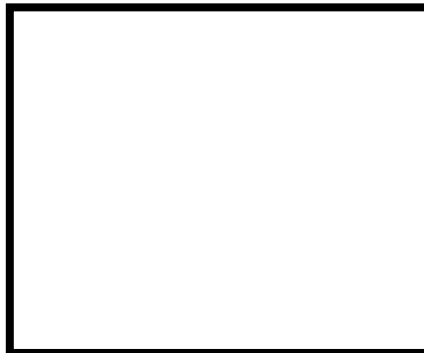
Adult Trivia Questions:

1. Name the common KS woodpecker species in order of their size.
2. Identify the largest rodent in Kansas.
3. How many owl species live in Kansas year-round.

Kids! Draw your favorite insect.

Kids' Trivia Questions:

1. Name three Kansas animals that are green.
2. List four Kansas animals that have claws.
3. Name the state Mammal, Reptile, Bird, Insect, Amphibian, and Tree.

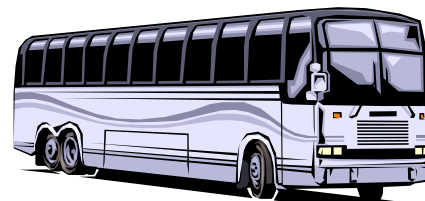


(Send in your picture, be sure to include your name and age, and the LDC judges will pick their favorite from those submitted and publish it in the next issue.)

For Lakewood Trivia simply send in your name and your answers. If all your answers are correct, we will put your name in the next newsletter.

Salina Parks & Recreation 50 PLUS PROGRAM SPRING MYSTERY TRIP

Join Janice Pankratz of the 50 Plus Program on Thursday and Friday, April 6-7 for a mystery trip that will take us south. I'm sure there will be many things on this trip you will enjoy. The chartered bus will leave at 7:00 a.m. from the southwest corner of the BiCenter and will return the following evening around 7:00 p.m. Cost for the trip is \$169.00 per person for double occupancy. For more information, contact Janice at 309-5765. Deadline is March 17.



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